for a short period. With one flood, the entire farmers' community suffers for the whole of the year. Sir, it is not only in Assam alone. We have been observing it in parts of Bihar, which is suffering badly for the last few years. Sir, the farmers economy collapses because of floods. Now, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has proposed to announce certain special packages or special agricultural programmes by which the economy of the farmers can be revamped in the flood-affected areas.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: It is true that there are certain States, especially, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and parts of West Bengal, which are facing regular problem of floods. There are number of proposals which are essentially handled by the Ministry of Water Resources to control this, and, to take corrective action to control the floods and its menace. Regarding agriculture, as I initially said, there are a number of schemes that have been implemented in the State of Assam and other States also. In fact, recently, we have taken up a major scheme under which about Rs. 25,000 crores would be provided for the whole country to enhance the agriculture production, especially wheat, rice and pulses. This particular scheme is also applicable to Assam and a number of districts from Assam have been taken for enhancement of production of rice. So, whatever schemes are available for the rest of the country, those are also available for Assam also.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are fully aware that the flood is a tragic incident which occurs every year in our country. It is also a fact that farmers lose their jobs regularly. In the written reply of the hon. Minister, he has said that the figure is fluctuating. There is a fluctuating trend of jobs being lost by the farmers. Sir, whether fluctuating or non-fluctuating, it is a fact that due to the floods, farmers lose their jobs. So, my specific question, through you, to the hon. Minister is, what is the comprehensive planning to provide them some relief on behalf of the Government of India? This is my specific question to the hon. Minister.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: As I have said, through the Calamity Relief Fund and the National Calamity Contingency Fund a specific amount has been provided to every State when they face this type of calamity. The monetary support is essentially provided to the affected people that includes landless labourers and farmers also. Certain amount of money has been provided; up to a certain quantity of foodgrains has also been provided; and some other relief has also been provided. And, this is the uniform policy for the whole country where this type of natural calamity regularly occurs.

*85. [The questioner (SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL) was absent. For answer *vide* page *23...infra.]*

Assessment of passenger traffic requirements

*86. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have assessed the passenger traffic requirements of the Hyderabad-Tirupathi and Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam section for the year 2007-08 and projected figures for 2008-09;

(b) if so, what are the shortfalls in present availability of passenger coaches for the existing trains on the above two sections respectively;

(c) whether Railways would correct and rectify the chronic and extreme shortage of passenger trains and passenger accommodation through a mid-year review; and

(d) what steps would be taken in the short-term to increase trains in the Hyderabad-Tirupathi and Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam section in Andhra Pradesh alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is no shortfall in present availability of passenger coaches for existing trains.

(c) and (d) Monitoring of rush on trains running on Indian Railways is done on a day to day basis. Subject to operational feasibility, trains are augmented with extra coaches and special trains run to clear extra rush. To cater to the growing needs of passengers, on Hyderabad/Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam section, 2805/2806 Visakhapatnam-Tenali Janambhoomi Express has been extended upto Secunderabad from 01.07.2007 and its load has been augmented from 15 to 21 coaches from July, 2007. Moreover, during April—July, 2007, 130 additional coaches were added on trains running on Hyderabad/Secunderabad - Visakhapatnam section. Similarly, 229 additional coaches were added on the trains running on Hyderabad/Secunderabad -Tirupathi section. Further, 19 trips of special trains were provided between Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam/Howrah on weekly basis during 14.04.2007 and 16.06.2007.

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Sir, after the Railway Budget, hon. Members of Parliament from Andhra Pradesh met the hon. Minister of Railways to demand justice to the State which did not get required number of trains. More Members of Parliament represent Andhra Pradesh in Parliament. People are demanding more trains between important stations. This is a longstanding demand. I want to ask the hon, Minister whether the Railways are going to introduce any new trains in the State of Andhra Pradesh in the near future. Instead of more passenger trains, we want fast trains.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, Andhra Pradesh has never been neglected. I have already answered more than once in this august body how we have been giving trains. Sir, the new trains are introduced based on representations from the MLAs, MPs, VIPs and also various consultative bodies, user consultative bodies, at the level of divisions or zones. We all assess it and then the relevant Zonal Railway sends a proposal to the headquarters here in Rail Bhawan. Thereafter, one timetable conference is held annually in which we examine the case or proposal in totality seeing the path availability, the traffic potential, as I mentioned earlier, the demand, the commercial viability, etc. In 2004-05, we have given 20 new trains to Andhra Pradesh; in 2005-06, we gave 7 new trains; in 2006-07. we have given 14 trains.

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: These are only passenger trains.

SHRI R. VELU: These are both passenger as well as fast trains. So, we have given about 44 new trains to Andhra -Pradesh from 2004-05 onwards. Not that alone, we extended 33 trains, all existing, as good as giving a new path for the people to use. Also, we increased the frequency of ten trains. In all, 87 services have been provided to Andhra Pradesh. We have not neglected or ignored that line. Coming to the point whether we will be able to introduce trains, again, we will examine that in the next timetable conference. Not waiting for that, if it is necessary, as our hon. Member, Dr. Malaisamy, asked here, if there is a necessity to bridge the gap, we always run special trains to that effect.

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Sir, my second supplementary is this. Sir, as you are well aware, Tirupati is a very big holy place. Tirupati is one of the important holy places in the country. People from all parts of the country visit this city to have darshan of Lord Venkateshwara. There is only one train from New Delhi to Tirupati *via* Hyderabad. The distance is very long. There is a need to introduce super fast trains from New Delhi to Tirupati *via* Vijayawada and also another train for Hyderabad. People from Northern part of India also visit Tirupati.

Sir, part (b) of my second supplementary is this. Visakhapatnam city, like Mumbai, is becoming a major urban city in the country. There is a need for direct and fast train from New Delhi to Visakhapatnam. I would like to know whether the Railways are going to. introduce any new train from Visakhapatnam through Vijayawada.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, there is no denying the fact that Tirupati is one of the very important pilgrimage centres in the country. Thousands and lakhs of people throng there daily. In fact, we are running about eight pairs of trains from Secunderabad to Tirupati and about nine pairs of trains to Visakhapatnam. That is an industrial city, we are all aware of that.

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: I am asking for New Delhi, Sir.

SHRI R. VELU: I am coming to that. You raised the point by emphasising the importance of Tirupati and Visakhapatnam, so I must explain this. Now for Tirupati, we have trains from Hyderabad, Secunderabad, and also from Visakhapatnam. He wants new direct trains *via* Vijayawada. It will be examined.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has-admitted that 229 additional coaches were added to the trains running between Hyderabad and Tirupati and about 130 additional coaches were added to the trains running between Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam. Also, the Minister has said that 19 trips of special trains are run by the Railways to cater to the needs of the people. The hon. Minister's reply confirms that there is a potential and passenger* traffic is more than 100 per cent. Therefore, these trains are running. He says that eight trains are going between Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Hyderabad and Secunderabad and also, eight trains between Visakhapatnam and Secunderabad. Let me come to the straight point. That being the case, why don't you put additional trains to augment the capacity and to cater to the needs of the passengers? You have admitted that in your reply.

SHRI R. VELU: 1 agree because I have already given it in my reply. We are adding the coaches on a day-to-day basis with reference to the wait list of the passengers.

It is not as if we are doing it uniformly. In fact, if there is a necessity to have a permanent train, additional train, which will sustain that kind of traffic, we will definitely consider such a demand. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: When will you consider it? ...*(Interruptions)*... Now the time has come to consider that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the hon. Minister reply. ...*(Interruptions)*... Shri K. . B. Shanappa. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please let the Question-Hour proceed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री के.बी. शणप्पा : सभापति जी, माननीय मंत्री जी से मैं एक सवाल पूछना चाहता हूँ। हम लोग ने लास्ट सत्र में, कर्नाटक के 20 एम.पीज. ने रेलवे मंत्री के नाम पर एक सिग्नेचर कैम्पेन करके एक मैमोरंडम सबमिट किया था कि शोलपुर से बंगलौर और बंगलौर से शोलापुर के लिए एक नई ट्रेन का इंटरोडक्शन करें और साथ ही साथ जो ट्रेन जाती है यशवंतपुरा ट्रेन, बीजापुर वाया गुलबर्ग, गणगापुर, मंत्रालय, बंगलौर, जो हफ्ते में तीन दिन जाती है, इसके लिए हम लोगों ने रिक्वेस्ट की थी कि उसको डेली बनाया जाए । यह जो ट्रेन है, because of the density of population between Bangalore and Solapur, we requested you and there was a letter from you saying that you were looking into this subject. We want to know where it stands now.

SHRI R. VELU: As I mentioned earlier, hon. Member's request will be examined in the next time-table conference and if necessary, the frequency will be increased.

श्री के.बी. शणप्पा : सर, यशवंतपुरा का क्या हुआ?**…(व्यवधान)…**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. No second supplementary. One question please.

श्री के.बी. शण्प्पा : सर, उसी में यह सवाल है ।**…(व्यवधान)…** सर, उसी में यह सवाल है । **…(व्यवधान)…** I have not asked any second question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One question please. ...*(Interruptions)*.

श्री के.बी. शणप्पा : जो यशवंतपुरा ट्रेन चलती है, उसको डेली बनाने के लिए मैं सवाल कर रहा हूँ ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. He has answered the question. You can raise another question subsequently. ...*(Interruptions)*... Shri Penumalli Madhu. ...*(Interruptions)*.

श्री के.बी. शणप्पा : सर, उसी में यह सवाल है ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: No second question. ...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, I would like to seek a clarification from the Minister in respect of Andhra Pradesh. Instead of answering the question straight, the Minister is misleading the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put the question.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Yes, I am putting the question. When we are asking for new trains, he is talking about coaches; he is talking about special trains.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put the question.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Yes, Sir. My question is, whether in Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Visakhapatnam section, he is going to introduce new train. In Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Tirupati section, he said that he has added 229 coaches. I am asking him; I am seeking his clarification whether in view of the demand, he is going to introduce any new train or not. This is the issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please let the question be answered. ...*(Interruptions).*

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I am sorry to hear the hon. Member saying that I misled the House. I want to inform him that I never misled the House nor do I intend doing so in future. That is a correction I want to make. Secondly, he has asked a question whether I am going to introduce a new train. Today, what is the number of passengers 1 am getting for Tirupati or for Visakhapatnam? On a daily average, it is 5457 passengers to Tirupati and 3655 passengers for Visakhapatnam. What is my waitlist average? For Tirupati, it is only 193 and for Visakhapatnam, it is 482. Whether it calls for a new train or a special train is not the question. What is the waitlist on which I must base the introduction of a new train? As it is, it does not call for a new train with reference to the waitlist of the passengers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No.87. Shri Motilal Vora. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please, go ahead. ...*(Interruptions).*

गेहूं की खरीद

*87. **श्री मोती लाल वोरा** : ††

श्री सत्यव्रत चतुर्वेदी :

क्या **उपभोक्ता मामले, खाध और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) किसानों से गेहूं खरीदने के संबंध में सरकार का लक्ष्य क्या था और सरकार द्वारा कुल कितना गेहूं खरीदा जा सका है;

(ख) निजी कंपनियों द्वारा, विशेषकर पंजाब और हरियाणा की थोक मंडियों से कितनी मात्रा में गेहूं की खरीद की गई;

(ग) सरकार द्वारा हरियाणा और पंजाब की थोक मंडियों से कब और कितनी मात्रा में गेहूं की खरीद की गई;

(घ) खरीदे गेहूं को बरसात से बचाने के लिए कब और क्या व्यवस्था की गई;

(ड) जून, 2007 और उसके बाद हुई वर्षा के कारण कुल कितना गेहूं भीगा है; और

(च) भीगे हुए गेहूं को सड़ने से बचाने के लिए सरकार ने क्या कदम उठाए हैं?

उपभोक्ता मामले, खाध और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री शरद पवार) : (क) से (च) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रखा जा रहा है ।

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††यह प्रश्न मूल रूप से सभा में श्री मोती लाल वोरा द्वारा पूछा गया ।